(1) Drugs;

(2) Fertilizer, whether inorganic, organic or mixed;

(3) Foodstuffs, including edible oilseeds and oils;

(4) Hank yarn made wholly from cotton;

(5) Petroleum and petroleum products;

(6) Raw jute and jute textile;

(7) (i) seeds of food-crops and seeds of fruits and vegetables;

(ii) seeds of cattle fodder; and

(iii) jute seeds.

(b) There is no such proposal.

(c) to (e) In view of (b) above question does not arise.

Prices of foodgrains

†2064. SHRI RAJ MOHINDER SINGH MAJITHA:
DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI:

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the continuous rise in the prices of food items and foodgrains severely affect the society, especially the poor people;

(b) if so, Government's reaction thereto;

(c) whether it is also a fact that the prices of food items, foodgrains, fruits and vegetables have been rising continuously right from the beginning of year 2008 and the rate of their rise is more than the general wholesale index;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the decision taken by Government to face this situation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI TASLIMUDDIN): (a) and (b) Inflation in some food articles mainly rice and pulses except gram dal was witnessed mainly due to inadequate supplies in relation to demand, increase in MSP and bonus, diversion of food grain to bio-fuel and animal feed, production losses due to inclement weather conditions in both domestic and international markets. Government has protected poor sections of society through the following measures:

(i) Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) and Antodaya Anna Yojna (AAY). Under the TPDS, wheat, rice, sugar and kerosene oils are allocated to State Governments for distribution through the Fair Price Shops. The offtake of wheat and rice under Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) and other welfare schemes (OWS) has, however, been going up. For TPDS, wheat and

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

rice off take have gone up from 242 lakh tonnes in 2003-04 to 316 lakh tonnes in 2006-07 and 335.27 lakh tonnes in 2007-08. During the period April-September 2008, 167.38 lakh tonnes wheat and rice has been allocated under TPDS. The Central Issue Price for rice and wheat has not been revised since 1.7.2002. For wheat it remains at Rs 4.15 per kg for BPL and Rs 2 per kg for AAY. For rice, it is Rs 5.65 per kg for BPL and Rs 3 per kg for AAY.

(ii) Government also launched a scheme on 28.07.2008 to distribute one million tons of edible oils to States/UTs at a subsidy @ Rs.15/kg. Orders were placed for import of 3.60 lakh tons of edible oils. Of this, about 3.34 lakh tons of edible oil has landed; and about 1.82 lakh tons have so far been distributed to various States/UTs by Central PSUs for distribution to ration card holders @ 1 kg per ration card per month.

(iii) Government recently introduced a scheme under which the Public Sector Agencies like National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation of India Ltd. (NAFED), MMTC, PEC Ltd and State Trading Corporation (STC) can import pulses and sell the same at a subsidy of Rs.10/- per kg to the State Governments for distribution of pulses through Public Distribution System (PDS). It will be the responsibility of the State Government to ensure that pulses imported under the scheme are lifted and the targeted consumers get it. The scheme, therefore, aims at augmenting availability of pulses within the country through imports specifically for supplying to the poorer sections through PDS at a subsidized price.

(c) and (d) A comparison of the monthly indices reveals that the rate of increase in general wholesale index was more than rate of increase in indices of foodgrains till June 2008; from July the situation reversed largely on account of the fall in general WPI on account of the higher declines in Manufactured products and Fuel groups due to the slowing down of the economy. The rate of increase in fruits and vegetables indices was found to be more than rate of increase in general wholesale index except during January, June and October 2008 as evident from table below:-

Month	Food Grains		Fruits and vegetables		All Commodities	
	Index	Monthly percentage variation	Index	Monthly percentage variation	Index	Monthly percentage variation
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Nov 07	216.93	0	234.15	0	215.88	0
Dec 07	216.3	-0.29	222.14	-5.13	216.42	0.3
Jan 08	217.68	0.64	218.45	-1.66	218.15	0.8
Feb 08	219.05	0.63	220.28	0.84	219.88	0.8
Mar 08	222.26	1.47	236.1	7.18	225.54	2.6
Apr 08	223.92	0.75	245.4	3.94	228.5	1.3

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
May 08	222.76	-0.52	252.74	2.99	231.08	1.1
Jun 08	223.8	0.47	241.45	-4.47	237.38	2.7
Jul 08	228.15	1.94	252.03	4.38	240	1.1
Aug 08	229.66	0.66	255.14	1.23	241.24	0.5
Sep 08	229.85	0.08	276	8.18	241.5	0.1
Oct 08	231.12	0.55	271.65	-1.58	238.8	-1.1
Nov 08	235.68	1.97	274.12	0.91	234.58	-1.8

(e) The changes in prices of fruits and vegetables is owing to seasonal factors. In the case of onion, its Minimum Export Price (MEP) has been increased to improve the domestic availability and stabilize onion prices. The other specific measures with respect to foodgrains is listed under (a) & (b).

Reduction in monthly quota of rice to Kerala

2065.SHRI P.R. RAJAN: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether many representations had been submitted during the year 2008 regarding cut short of monthly quota of rice provided to Kerala for distribution as a part of rationing system;

(b) if so, the action taken in details and the reasons for reducing total quantity of rice;

(c) whether competent authority had considered the submissions of Kerala State before dividing ration card holders as above poverty line and below poverty line;

(d) if so, the details of above submissions that had been accepted;

(e) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(f) whether steps would be taken to restore same quota of rice supplied during year 2006-07?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (DR. AKHILESH PRASAD SINGH): (a) to (f) Representations have been submitted by Govt. of Kerala during the year 2008-09 for increasing rice allocation under APL category.

It may be mentioned that the allocation of foodgrains under Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) is made for BPL, AAY and APL families to all the States/UTs on the basis of 1993-94 poverty estimates of the Planning Commission, projected on the population estimates of Registrar General of India, as on 1.3.2000 or the number of families actually identified and ration card issued by each State/UT, whichever is less.

While full allocations of foodgrains have been made for BPL and AAY categories as per norms @ 35 kg per family per month for all accepted numbers of BPL/AAY families, allocations for APL